



U.S. Department of Justice

RONALD W. SHARPE
United States Attorney
District of the Virgin Islands

Ron de Lugo Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
5500 Veterans Drive, Suite 260
Charlotte Amalie
St. Thomas, VI 00802-6424

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AKEEM R. GUMBS INDICTED UNDER
PROJECT SAFE CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE OF FIVE FEDERAL COUNTS OF
PRODUCING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, ONE COUNT OF POSSESSING CHILD
PORNOGRAPHY; AND 24 LOCAL COUNTS OF AGGRAVATED RAPE
IN THE FIRST DEGREE

United States Attorney Ronald W. Sharpe, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Office of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agent in Charge Roberto Escobar Vargas, and Acting Virgin Islands Police Commissioner Novelle Francis announced today that on June 2, 2011, a federal grand jury returned a 31-count Indictment charging Akeem R. Gumbs with five federal counts of producing child pornography involving a minor under the age of 18; possessing child pornography; and 24 local counts of aggravated rape in the first degree.

As charged in Counts 1-5, producing child pornography, according to the Indictment, from in or around September, 2009, on St. Thomas to in or around March, 2011, in the District of the Virgin Islands, and elsewhere, the defendant did knowingly use a person under the age of 18 to engage in sexually explicit conduct; to wit, sexual intercourse and the lascivious exhibition of the genitals and pubic area of said minor, for the purpose of producing visual depictions of such conduct, such visual depictions having been actually produced using materials that had been transported in interstate and foreign commerce by any means.

In Count 6, according to the Indictment, on or about March 19, 2011, on St. Thomas, in the District of the Virgin Islands, and elsewhere, defendant did knowingly and willfully possess and attempt to possess, one or more materials which contained visual depictions of child pornography, including visual depictions which show a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct, where such depictions were produced using materials that had been transported in interstate and foreign commerce by any means.

Additionally, in Counts 7 - 31, according to the Indictment, from in or around September, 2009, on St. Thomas to in or around March, 2011, in the District of the Virgin Islands and elsewhere, the defendant, did knowingly perpetrate acts of sexual intercourse and sodomy with a person not his spouse; when said person was under the age 13.

The statutory penalty for production of child pornography under federal law is a mandatory minimum penalty of 15 years imprisonment per count. The statutory penalty for possessing child pornography under federal law is a maximum of 10 years imprisonment. Additionally each federal offense carries a \$250,000 fine. The statutory punishment for the local offense of aggravated rape in the first degree is a mandatory minimum penalty of seven years imprisonment per count. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Everard Potter and Denise A. Hinds.

“This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood,” said U.S. Attorney Sharpe. “In 2006, the United States Department of Justice launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse.” “Led by the United States Attorneys’ Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identifying and rescuing victims.”

"The sexual exploitation of children is a despicable crime," said Special Agent in Charge Escobar Vargas. "Working in conjunction with our state, local and federal law enforcement partners, we will continue aggressively pursuing those who victimize the most vulnerable segment of our society, our children."

This case was investigated under Operation Predator, an ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers.

ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators by calling 1-866-DHS-2ICE. For more information, visit www.ice.gov. You may also visit ICE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

U.S. Attorney Sharpe emphasized that an Indictment is merely a charging document and that, as in all criminal cases, the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.